

H.B. No. 5031 AN ACT CONCERNING SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES.

I would like to thank the committee for giving me the opportunity to testify today. I am currently attending UCONN SSW pursuing a masters degree in social work policy. As a requirement I must testify at a public hearing. I currently intern at Hartford Action Plan, located in the north end of Hartford. One of my tasks at this agency is researching the prevalence of Teen Dating Violence. Sexual abuse and sexual assault are part of a culture of violence against woman on college campuses. I have a wealth statistical data on the pervasiveness of sexual assault against young woman. I am confident that this committee has done its due diligence and is aware of the magnitude of such violent crimes. Sexual assaults occur to often on college campuses in Connecticut and across the country.

Today I am going to speak as a father, like any father I wanted the best possible life for my child. I can remember coming home, and hearing the rattling of toys, as my daughter would play in her room. Once she heard the door close, she would stop playing and would run as fast as her little legs would go and 3 steps out leap into my arms. When I dropped my daughter off in late August 2010 at Southern Connecticut State University I knew she would no longer leap into my arms from three steps out.

On October 15, 2010 my daughter ran into my arms this time in the office of the campus police department, unable to lift her head off my shoulder because of the horrific sexual assault which occurred a day earlier. My daughter had no knowledge on how to respond to a sexual assault. She did not report the incident immediately instead she told her friend what happened who convinced her to report the assault later that day. When she did report the incident my daughter was victimized again by an unsympathetic clerk at the campus police department. The police department employee began to question my daughter as if she were the perpetrator and not the victim. After a brief interview with the officer on duty and referral to the campus counseling center my daughter then went back to her dorm. My daughter was not aware of any protocol which could have helped in convicting the male student who assaulted her. The police detective who investigated my daughter's assault had no doubt the assault took place, the detective also had no evidence and was not able to bring charges against the young male who assaulted my daughter. The student was allowed to remain on campus. In May 2011 the same student who assaulted my daughter assaulted another female on the grounds of SCSU and was arrested by campus police for that sexual assault.

As a father, social work student, and a citizen of Connecticut I hope this legislation, H.B. 5031 is passed. I feel it will provide the necessary tools for students who are victims, to protect themselves, and to help prosecute the perpetrators of these violent crimes.

STOP

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